SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS-COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

French Policy in Italy and Turkey. From the N. Y. Tribune.

It is certainly a remarkable fact that the very Prince who was the first in Europe to advocate the right of nations to demand, and, if practicable, to establish their national unity, should now be the leading oppenent of the

national aspirations in every important question of the kind. Who would put obstacles in the way of German unity, if Napoleon should withdraw his opposition? Who would have stopped the victorious march of Garibaldi, and saved the decayed chair of St. Peter, if the French troops had stayed at home? and who would think of drawing the sword for the effete power of the Turks, if France should ob-

serve an absolute neutrality? With regard to Germany, France has for some months preserved an absolute silence. But in both Italy and Turkey French diplomacy is just now most actively engaged to thwart, if possible, the inevitable result of

national aspirations.

In the Roman question, Napoleon urges with great persistency the holding of a European Conference. He has invited to it even the third-rate powers of Europe, which, flattered by the unusual honor of such an invitatien, are all expected to accept it. Napoleon maintains the European character of the Roman question, on the ground that every Government which has Roman Catholic subjects is concerned in the maintenance of the independence of the Holy Father. Italy strongly opposes the Congress, insisting that the settlement of the Roman question is wholly an Italian affair, in which foreign nations have no right to intervene. We do not know yet whether England and Russia, which were reported to be against the holding of the Congress, have withdrawn their oppo sition or not. The Pope will feel anything but satisfaction at the prospect of such a Congress, as he is fully aware that most of the European Governments care little about the continuance of the States of the Church. France herself, if the majority of the Conference should desire it, would be willing to urge a further reduction of the temporal possessions of the Holy Father, notwithstanding all the censures of the Church threatening those consenting to such schemes. But, on the other hand, France will make the utmost exertions, not from any regard for the Catholic Church, but in her own interest, to gain the consent of the Conference to the preservation of some part of the Papal territory, and thus act again as the leading opponent of Italian unity. But there need not be much fear of any important results being achieved by the new plan of Napoleon. The Governments taking part in the Congress will be willing to give their opinion, but hardly a single one will assume the responsibility to aid in the enforcement of any kind of intervention.

We know but little about the present intentions of France with regard to the Eastern complication, and about the alliance which is said to have been concluded between her and England and Austria. France, during the past year, has several times joined Russia and her allies in urging upon the Porte certain concessions. When these were stubbornly declined, France again followed the course suggested by her own interest. Russia is commonly believed to be determined to use coercive measures for securing the rights of the Christian population, while France reverts to her traditional policy to prevent the enlarge-ment of Russian influence in the East, entirely regardless of the wishes of the majority of the population. The Governments of Austria and England are equally desirous of preventing Russian progress, and equally indifferent as to the sentiments of the people; but while Louis Napoleon may get the consent of the Legisla ture to any measure he proposes, both Austria and England would find it difficult to get from their Parliaments the sanction of any except

In both questions France pursues an antidemocratic and an anti-national course, a course which, the longer it is persisted in must the more surely destroy the influence of France in Italy and Turkey.

diplomatic remonstrances.

Congress and our National Finances. From the N. Y. Herald.

In a few days Congress will meet again, and will meet under peculiar circumstances. None of its predecessors ever met under such an extraordinary state of affairs, both politically and financially, particularly as regards our national finances. It is not a new Congress, but since its last session terminated a surprising change has taken place in public sentiment. The voice of the people, from one end of the country to the other, proclaims loudly the condemnation of its measures and weakness. The blatant and violent radicals who have wasted the time of Congress in spouting about and clamoring for impeachment of the President are themselves impeached by a higher power. They have been tried before the bar of public opinion, and a scathing ver dict has been pronounced against them. This dominant party was all-powerful; there was but the shadow of opposition; it was able at all times not only to silence opposition, but even to carry its measures over the veto of the President by the constitutional twothirds vote. It had no excuse whatever for bad legislation or for not doing its duty to the

Looking at this fact and at the popular judgment pronounced against this weak and reckless Congress, we are curious to see what will be its conduct on reassembling. In its pride and mortification it may become more reckless still, and defy public opinion. There are examples in history where such violent and revolutionary Jacobins have set themselves up above the people. But if they should dare to act so they will only-intensify the odium with which they are now regarded. There may be, however, a sufficient number of members in both Houses conservative and patriotic enough to respect the will of the people as expressed at the late elections. We may see men of sagacity, prudence, and foresight—such men, perhaps, as Senators Sher-man, Trumbull, or Fessenden—put themselves in the breach to stem the torrent of radicalism and save the country from the evils their party has brought upon us. The conduct of Congress will be watched with intense interest, and the people will surely mark those mam bers who may persiat in their radical and

destructive course. With regard to mere political matters or to the question of reconstruction, Congress has lone as much mischlef as it well could do. Much of this mischlef is irreparable, at least for the present. The South, that magnificent and richly productive portion of our country, has been turned over to negro domination-to

the government of semi-barbarians. Little can be done to arrest the disaster. It must run its course for awhile. The reaction in time will sweep away the obnoxious features of re-construction. The day is not far off when the people of the whole North—this proud Caucasian white race—will demand the emancipa-tion of their white brethren in the South from the barbarous rule of the negroes. In the meantime there are other questions of the highest importance looming up and requiring skilful management.

Laying aside the question of reconstruction, the one which overshadows all others is that of our national finances. The expenditure of the Federal Government is something like five hundred millions of dollars a year, with the prospect that, under the disorganized state of the South and a costly military despotism there, it will soon exceed that. This, together with the burden of State, county, and municipal debts and extravagant local expenditures, swells the aggregate amount of taxation to a

The local government of the city of New York alone costs over twenty millions of dollars. Reckless extravagance is the curse of all parties, for here we are under Democratic rule; but it is just to say that the stupendous debt and frightful taxation of the Federal Government are the result of radical Republican misrule. A thousand millions of taxation! What people ever bore such a weight? How can we continue to bear it? We must remember, too, that nearly all this burden falls upon the North. Under the destructive legislation of Congress the South will be less and less able to aid in carrying this burden. Twenty-five millions of people have to bear a thousand millions of taxation! Forty dollars a head for every man, woman, and child! Or for every head of a family from two to three hundred dollars a year! How are the working classes to endure such taxation? At least a third of all they earn goes directly or indirectly to Government. No people in the world are taxed anything like this. Even in Great Britain, where they are more heavily taxed than anywhere else, except in this republic, taxes do not amount to half what we have to bear. Our people bore this patiently until the war was finished and the Union made secure, but they will certainly not bear it long in time of peace.

Yet we see a certain class of politicians and journals, allied with the bondholders and the national bank oligarchy, which would increase the weight of the debt and make it a perpetual burden. They would reduce the currency and thereby reduce the means of the people and the revenue of the Government, so as to add forty per cent. to the wealth of the bondholders. If the insane demands of these people for specie payments could be complied with, we could neither pay the debt nor bear the taxation to meet the interest. We should be bound down as securely and perpetually under a stupendous debt as the people of

England are. The first thing Congress should do, then, is to reduce the expenditures of Government to the utmost and to make a corresponding reduction in taxation. The system of revenue should be simplified, and the expensive machinery now used to collect it abolished. All burdens upon productive industry, as that of the cotton tax, should be removed. Mr. McCulloch should be stepped from curtailing the currency any more; and, if necessary to stimulate production, to reduce the debt, to make money abundant and easy, and thereby to secure a large revenue, an additional amount of legal-tenders might be gradually and prudently issued. But by all means the national bank notes should be withdrawn and greenbacks issued in their place. By doing this the Government could liquidate at once three hundred millions of interest-bearing bonds and save twenty-five millions a year. As much of the debt as possible should be paid at once, and continued to be paid, while currency is depreciated.

By cancelling three hundred millions of the interest-bearing debt by substituting legaltenders for national bank notes, and by using the surplus money in the Treasury, five hundred millions of the debt would be paid at once. Then, by following the course we have suggested, another five hundred millions might be liquidated in the course of a few years. Thus, in less than five years a thousand millions, or one-half of the interest-bearing debt, could be paid. All this might be done, too, with reduced taxation, if the finances be properly managed and the Government administered economically. This is the important work for Congress to set about doing. It cannot be ignored or delayed long without plunging the country into inextrica-ble difficulties. Let that body, then, drop the negro and attend to the national finances as soon as it reassembles.

A Democratic "Path to Peace."

From the N. Y. Times. The World is entitled to credit for the persistency with which it urges on its party the propriety and expediency of acquiescing in compromise as the basis of national restoration. We can only regret that the particular forms of compromise which it has suggested, imperfectly realize the spirit in which they originate.

An error committed at the outset invalidates the whole argument. The World assumes that the results of the elections held this fall are equivalent to a complete victory for the Democrats. It takes for granted the ability of the Democracy to carry the elections next year; and on the hypothesis that they will elect the next President and control the House in the next Congress it proposes that the Republicans shall throw overboard the reconstruction acts, and admit the Southern States en conditions which their opponents may consent to yield. In other words, our contemporary discusses the situation under a firm persuasion that the Democrats are already its masters, and, therefore, that the party in power cannot do better than imitate Captain Scott's coon, and come down

as though it were already shot. The terms of compromise specifically suggested are in harmony with this general estimate. In the first instance they amounted to nothing more than an acknowledgment of the civil equality of the negroes-all other matters being for the time ignored. This has since been enlarged so far as to include the establishment of qualified negro suffrage after a five years' probation. Other constitutional changes are also hinted at, the precise nature whereof is to be fixed by "a National Conference composed of men of moderation and character representing all the various inte-rests." This is the latest point at which the World has arrived on the Democratio "path to

"A conference of this kind, consisting of slady or eighty men of eminent standing, ripe exterience, and persuasive temper, would succeed rience, and persuasive temper, would succeed in finding some solution of our autional difficulties which would lift the Union out of the slongh of party politics, and re establish it on the only basis whereon it can stand—that of comprehensive, all-adjusting equity. Any propositions which a conference so composed should agree in recommending, would probably be so intrinscally fair, so marked by considerate and recobelling justice, that they would command a popular support wide enough to put them into the Constitution, if that should be deemed their fittest embodiment."

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Now, we conceive that the World is pursuing an honorable object in a very creditable temper, but with a total misapprehension o the facts. The Democrats are not masters of the situation. It were folly to depreciate the value of their victory in this State, or the significance of their gains in other States; but the attempt to magnify these events into a great national triumph is equally absurd. The battle of next year remains to be fought, and at present the odds are overwhelmingly in favor of the Republicans. If they fail, it will be from the neglect of causes which are entirely under their control. They have it in their power to say who shall be Mr. Johnson's suessor, and to make the next Congress unmistakably Republican in both branches. Both objects might be attained within the existing limits of Congressional representation. But they are placed beyond reasonable doubt by the prospect of admitting the greater number, if not all, of the ten States now excluded with their popular vote to swell the triumph of General Grant, and their Senators and Representatives to augment the legislative

strength of the Republican party.

The assumption which underlies the argument of the World is, then, radically unsound. Il perverts the import of facts that exist, and presupposes facts which are not likely to Hence the inutility of all moralizing predicated on the ability of the Democrats to prevent the completion of reconstruction in conformity with the present law. They may lessen its efficacy as a healing measure by exiting groundless expectations in the minds of the Southern whites, but they cannot defeat or even delay the reorganization which is progrossing subject to its previsions. The best service which a Democratic journalist can render to the South or the country is to admit the helplessness of his party in the presence of the power of which Congress is but the exponent, and to urge compliance with the law as the surest mode of promoting peace and

prosperity.

Certain it is that the proposed "National Conference" can accomplish nothing in regard to the mode of adjusting existing difficulties. That "sixty or eighty men of eminent stand-ing" might be brought together from North and South, we do not deny. Three or four times that number might be mustered, we dare say, without exhausting the available "moderation and character" of the two great parties. What then? Does anybody believe that its deliberations would stay the action of Congress, arrest the current of public opinion, or in the slightest degree affect the operation of the law? Does even the World believe that the deliberations of a small body of gentlemen, acting in their individual capacity, with no pretension to representative authority, would produce an abandonment of the Congressional policy? For the World does not disguise its anticipation that the Conference, if held, would recommend the adoption, substantially, of the Democratic doctrine on the Reconstruction question, and that implies the almost unconditional admission of the Southern States. It is with this expectation that the suggestion is propounded.

National conferences of an informal, unauthorized, and eminently proper character have been tried before with results not very encouraging to those who would thus influence public opinion. The Peace Convention which met at Washington in 1861 talked wisely, deliberated calmly, and offered recommendations at once temperate and fair. But it accomplished nothing. The Philadelphia Convention last year inculcates the same lesson. Never was anything more rich in blossom or more barren of fruit. In both instances, how-ever, the circumstances were more propitions than those under which the *World's* Conference would now assemble. The sword had not been unsheathed when the Washington Convention defined "the path to peace." reconstruction policy had not advanced beyond the comparatively mild Constitutional Amendment, when the Philadelphia Convention prescribed for the sores of the republic. The case now is altogether different. Primary issues have been determined. Congress has asserted exclusive authority over reconstruction has laid down the conditions by which it shall be regulated, and enjoys an assurance of power to enforce its legislation. Think you that it would surrender its jurisdiction, recede from its requirements, and reverse its action at the bidding of "sixty or eighty men of eminent standing," convened on the supposition that the Democrats are masters of the field?

Possibly it may be desirable by-and-by to have a National Convention, regular in form, and binding in authority, with the view of re-vising the Federal Constitution, and adapting it to the altered circumstances of the country When that time arrives it will be the duty of all to discard mere party considerations, and to labor honestly for such amendments of the organic law as shall fully cover every exigency growing out of the war, and, while restoring the smooth working of the Government, shall provide adequately for the rights and unity of the States.

In the meantime the great duty is to complete the reconstruction of the fouth under the law as it stands, relying upon the good sense of the Republicans in Congress to tone down the proceedings of the State Conventions, and to establish a uniform policy of forbearance and liberality, instead of the proscription which is threatened. If the Democratic members choose to aid the Republicans in thus softening the asperities and mitigating the difficulties of reconstruction, they may partially atone for the mischief they effected in the last Congress. However this may be we cannot doubt that, as matters now stand the Congressional plan is the only solid "path to peace." The path indicated by the Democratic organ is a will-o'-the-wisp, leading through quagmires and ending in disaster.

Africans.

From the N. Y. World. The Republican party carried through Congress the Reconstruction act which compels the Southern States to make all male negroes over twenty-one years of age voters. In conformity with this Republican plan, negroes have voted for delegates to the Constitutional Conventions, been elected as delegates, and are now sitting in convention. This Republican plan was not partial, but impartial, negro suffrage. It did not discriminate against ignorance and barbarism, but constrained the States, by Congressional force, to make voters of all negroes, whether good or bad, virtuous or victous, sober or drunken, educated or ignorant, elevated or debased. It went far beyond enfranchisement, which includes the guarantee of snch a status as shall secure to Africans equally with all other citizens, the full enjeyment of all the rights of free persons, such as in New York are given to unnaturalized citizens, young men under the age of twenty-one years, citizens of other States sojourning here, and negroes not having the requisite property qualifications. It swept in its ample reach all the lazy, licentious, brutalized elements of the black population of the South. It was as if the worst white soum of London, or the continent, were imported into the North, and in a day made by Congressional act voters in Boston, New York,

civilization about the Congressional plan; it was an outpouring advance of barbarism; a confession that education is unnecessary to make a voter in a republic. It was not statesmanship; it was mere pot-house partisanship of the lowest type-an effort to hold political power by means of a brutal black mob driven to the polls like cattle. If we are asked for evidence of this, the proof is everywhere in

Now, if this subject were divested of all fits partisan relations, no sensible member of the Republican party, consplcuous for his intelligence and soundness of judgment on everyday affairs, would approve this scheme of at once making voters out of the uneducated, unreflecting, thriftless field hand Africans of the South. Such a man sees at once that the project is totally unlike a proposition to educate and elevate, if possible, the negroes, and then give to them the elective franchise. There are to-day, in the Loyal League Club in Union square, many members who vindicate the Republican contrivance of reconstruction, and yet, on the slighest provocation, will declaim by the hour against the outtrage of permitting naturalized Irishmen and Germans to influence by a vote the affairs of the city of New York. These Loyal Leaguers are didactic, argumentative, and verbose about the danger to our free institutions from this assumed white ignorance. They stigmatize Irishmen and Germans as casting "the foreign vote." Whatever goes worst of all in our city affairs they attribute to what they call the ignorance of this vote. If these Loyal Leaguers are reminded of the inconsistency of their political action in the matter, they abandon at once all inquiry about the relative intelligence of the two races, and give what seems to them a very logical retort, to the effect that they never can proscribe a man on account of his color. To all suggestions that it is not a matter of color, but of intelligence and fitness to vote, they turn a deaf ear, and bab-ble on about "the age of progress" and! "the inalienable rights of man." If asked why they do not insist, by Congressional enactment, that red men, Indians, shall vote in the new communities of the West, they sputter out some-thing about "Copperheads," and fall into a tone of ribald abuse.

It is for the edification of such advocates of immediate, universal African elevation in the late insurrectionary States, regardless of preliminary education, and we copy from the Times an extract from a recent letter of its Tennessee correspondent. He alludes first to the doings of the Radical Legislature in respect to passengers on railways, which up to very recently have kept separate cars for Africaus, carrying them for three cents per mile, while white people paid five cents. The Legislature, under Radical influences, passed a law making it a misdemeanor, punishable with fine and imprisonment, for any common carrier to make any discrimination on account of race or The railroads were thereupon constrained to let the Africans go in any car they preferred, and to charge them five instead of three cents a mile. Of the practical result of this "manhood" piece of legislation, the Times

correspondent says:-"Now, this equal rights theory may be well enough in the Northern States, where the blacks are few and intelligent, and cleanly in their habits; but in the South, where they are numerous and poor, and many of them absonumerous and poor, and many of them absolutely filthy, the practical operations of this theory in this particular are anything but acceptable. I speak plainly, for nothing but plain talk is proper when dealing with these questions. To ride in cars half filled with wandering, worthless, indolent blacks is not a pleasant undertaking. To take a sleeping car and find blacks above you and below and all about you, is not tempting. Such fears may provoke ridicule and sarcasm, but they are not visionary. They are practical questions here under existing circumstances, and can only be met in this way. If such things are the legitimate result of impartial suffrage or universal suffrage, we of impartial suffrage or universal suffrage, we might as well know it now as hereafter. I do not know that they are, I do not think it would be, if our legislators were possessed of judgment and discretion. They are not such results as sensible, intelligent blacks desire, but they are results which will cer-tainly follow if this signit of innovation is not

From this subject, which is one of social inconvenience, the correspondent passes to another radical scheme which involves a practical destruction of the system of jury trials. Writing of a bill to make jurors of Africans. be says:-

"The latter bill is now before the Legislature, and will probably pass. The bill is not to admit all blacks, but only such as are qualified voters, it has the same obnoxious political qualifications as the jury law now in force—a law which has been more mischlevous and more corrupting than any law ever enacted. It has degraded the judicial proceedings of the State; it has filled the jury-box with partisans, and has made the trial by jury in many counties in East Tennessee a farce. It has provoked the most serious apprehensions, and there is scarcely a lawyer of any practice in this section of the State—I care not what his political proclivities may be—who is not thoroughly per-"The latter bill is now before the Legislature clivities may be—who is not thoroughly spaded that it has done incalculable har suaded that it has done incalculable harm to the interests of litigants. One after another these innovations come. There is scarcely a law in any respect political in its nature that has not been tampered with since the war. The most venerable customs and the most vital interests of the people and the dearest rights of the citizen, however secure by prescription or by pighted faith, have been invaded by pas-sionste, hasty, and ill-considered legislation. The examples I have given will show the spirit of the present Legislature and the dangers to be apprehended. Every careful observer most notice these things. What will come next?"

In the Convention now in session in Alabama to make a State Constitution is to be seen, in full play, the elevation of uneducated Africans. A pure blooded African, a plantation hand, named Strother, is a member of the Committee on Taxation and Pinance Another African, Finley, who can scarcely read or write, is a member of the Committee on Education and the School Fund! Diggs. another African who, on the registration of members, was compelled to make his mark, being unable to write, is member of the Committee on Amendments to the Constitution! And Alexander, the African who insisted upon crying out "here," when called to vote for one of two persons by count, is member of the Committee on County and Manicipal Organi-

A natural culmination of the action of such legislators took place in the Alabama Conven-tion on Monday 1 st. The Committee on the Elective Franchise was unable to agree. The minority was conservative, the majority radioat. There were two reports. That of the majority proposes sweeping measures of disfran-chisement. In the first place, it provides that every male citizen twenty-one years of age, who shall be a citizen of the United States, or declared his intention of becoming such, who shall have resided in the State six and in the county three months preceding an election, shall be deemed an elector.

This includes all Africans, good or bad. educated or uneducated. The second section provides for the registration of all persons slected except the following three classes:-First, those who during the late rebellion in any way violated the rules of civilized warfare; second, those who have been convicted of treason, embezzlement of public funds, malessance in office, crime punishable by law with imprisonment in the penitentiary, or bribery; third, those who, having been regis tered in accordance with the provisions of the Reconstruction act of Congress, refuse to vote either for or against the new Constitution when

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it shall be submitted for ratification, provided, however, that no person shall be disfranchise by this clause whose failure to vote shall be in consequence of sickness, necessary absence or any providential occurrence rendering it impossible for him to reach the polls. This majority scheme will be adopted by the Convention, all reports agree, unless different orders are received from the Republican headcentre in Washington.

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